

B. The Claims Are Not Obvious Over McDonough In View of Thorne Pursuant To 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 36-70 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,115,693 to McDonough et al. (hereinafter "McDonough") and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,100,891 to Thorne (hereinafter "Thorne"). Applicant respectfully disagrees with the rejections.

In order to reject a claim as obvious, the Examiner has the burden of establishing a *prima facie* case of obviousness. *In re Warner et al.*, 379 F.2d 1011, 154 U.S.P.Q. 173, 177-178 (C.C.P.A. 1967). To establish a *prima facie* obviousness of a claimed invention, all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, 180 U.S.P.Q. 580 (C.C.P.A. 1974), MPEP § 2143.03.

The Examiner states:

McDonough teaches a system comprising:

a server configured to process business transactions (servers operated by Content providers, Fig. 4 and L 426, ...434, col. 8 L 61-67);

a middleware program communicatively coupled to the server (context manager 402, Fig. 4 and col. 8 L 51-60, which provides management of the information);

a channel communicatively coupled to the middleware program and to the server (channel is shown as customer contact access methods and shown in Fig. 4 as kiosk 424, call center 422, phone 420 etc.); and

an interface program communicatively coupled to the channel and to the middleware program, wherein the interface program is configured to received data and a command that will initiate a business transaction (the context manager also performs functions of the interface program as described in col. 8 L 51-67, management capability for multiple customer access resources which share common business processes);

wherein the interface program receives data from the channel and transmits the data to the middleware program (an inherent feature of a middleware CORBA as discussed in col. 9 L 25-30, also refer to description of the context manager discussed in analysis of above steps).

McDonough, while teaches the system substantially as claimed, fails to explicitly, recite a domain file comprising a list of allowable values associated

with one or more business transactions...

Thorne, in the same field of endeavor, however, teaches a system for application of data communication and data conversion and validation which comprises a domain file comprising a list of allowable values associated with a business transaction (col. 6 L 17-30) and further suggests determining whether the portion of the data include allowable values based on a domain files (list of allowable values .. or establishing a database).

Claim 36 describes a combination of features including:

- a server configured to process business transactions;

- a middleware program communicatively coupled to the server;

- a domain file, wherein the domain file comprises a list of allowable values associated with one or more business transactions;

- a channel communicatively coupled to the middleware program and to the server; and

- an interface program communicatively coupled to the channel and to the middleware program, wherein the interface program is configured to receive data and a command that will initiate a business transaction;

- wherein the interface program receives data from the channel and transmits the data to the middleware program; wherein the middleware program determines whether portions of the received data include allowable values based on the domain file, and wherein the middleware program transforms the data into a form required by the server, and transmits the transformed data to the server.

McDonough appears to teach a Context Manager as an interface, or middleware, between customer access resources and a business process service provider. For example, McDonough states: "The Context Manager 402 provides the interface between the business process service provider 410 and the different customer access resources 420-434." (McDonough, column 8, lines 61-63)

The invention of Thorne appears to be directed to an interface for providing a script to an agent during a calling campaign. For example, Thorne states:

The invention according to a preferred embodiment provides an improved agent interface for interactively providing a script to an agent during a calling campaign. The agent interface includes an outline panel means for displaying a call flow outline,... (Thorne, column 3, lines 33-37)

Thorne appears to teach an interface which provides prompts for information and message dialogues for errors. For example, Thorne states:

The agent prompts the called/calling party for information by following the script text and records responses by filling in entry fields, making selections from lists, and manipulating other interface controls. The script text, entry fields, selection lists, and other interface controls are contained in the action panel area 37 of the agent's screen. The contents of the action panel are specific to the current section of the script. The program directs the conversation according to a default script scenario and customer responses. The program may provide message dialogues for invalid or incomplete entries. (Thorne, column 4, lines 29-39)

In addition, Thorne appears to teach an application building tool for designing and testing the agent interface which uses a list of allowable values for data elements. For example, Thorne states:

The system of the invention further provides an application building tool which provides a means for designing and testing the agent interface described above. (Thorne, column 5, lines 60-62)

The application development tool provides for defining call data elements, their display attributes and data manipulation methods. The application developer defines the call data elements by creating a new element and assigning a logical name. New elements are local program variables and may also be mapped to the database for read only lookup, or update. The developer may assign a list of allowable values to each element by entering the list of values or establishing a database table mapping. (Thorne, column 6, lines 17-25)

Applicant submits that the list of allowable values and method of validation used by Thorne is contained in the user interface. Applicant also submits that Thorne does not teach or suggest the use of middleware. Applicant further submits that if the method of Thorne was applied to the

invention of McDonough, the list of allowable values and method of validation would necessarily be contained in the user interface as well and not in the Context Manger (i.e., middleware).

Obviousness can only be established by “showing some objective teaching in the prior art or that knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art would lead that individual to combine the relevant teaching of the references.” *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596, 1598 (Fed. Cir. 1988). Applicant submits that the validation method of Thorne used in the user interface would not be appropriate for modification of the middleware of McDonough.

Applicant’s claim 36 is directed to a combination of features including the feature “wherein the middleware program determines whether portions of the received data include allowable values based on the domain file”. Applicant submits that at least this feature, in combination with other features of the claim, is not taught or suggested by McDonough in view of Thorne. Applicant respectfully requests removal of the rejection of claim 36 and the claims dependent thereon.

Claim 51 describes a combination of features including:

- receiving data from one interface program of a plurality of interface programs, wherein each interface program is communicatively coupled to one of a plurality of channels;

- determining whether a portion of received data includes values in a list of allowable values;

- flattening the data; and

- transferring the data to a business transaction server;
wherein the program instructions comprise a plurality of objects.

Applicant submits, for at least the reasons cited above, that the features of claim 51 are not taught or suggested by McDonough in view of Thorne. Applicant respectfully requests removal of the rejection of claim 51 and the claims dependent thereon.

Claim 61 describes a combination of features including:

entering data into a channel that communicatively couples to the user interface;

transferring the data to the middleware program;

determining whether a portion of the data includes values in a list of allowable values;

transforming the data into a form required by the business transaction server using the middleware program;

transferring the data to the business transaction server using the middleware program; and
processing the data using the business transaction server.

Applicant submits, for at least the reasons cited above, that the features of claim 61 are not taught or suggested by McDonough in view of Thorne. Applicant respectfully requests removal of the rejection of claim 61 and the claims dependent thereon.

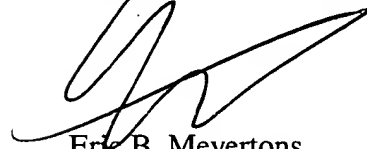
C. Summary

Based on the above, Applicant submits that all claims are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicant respectfully requests a two-month extension of time to respond to the Office Action dated January 31, 2003. A Fee Authorization is enclosed to cover the two-month extension of time. If any additional extension of time is required, Applicant hereby requests the appropriate extension of time. If any additional fees are required, or if fees have been overpaid, please charge or credit those fees to Meyertons, Hood, Kivlin, Kowert & Goetzel, P.C. Deposit Account Number 50-1505/5053-30700/EBM.

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Respectfully submitted,



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